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REDUCE BENEFITS OF SOCIAL LEGISLATION
TO MEET PRESENT PRODUCTION NEEDS;
SEE POLAND FAR FROM COMMUNIST GOAL

Jan Nowek

One of the principles of socialism is: from each according to his ability, to each according to his work. Not until Communism is achieved, when there is a maximum abundance of utilities, can utilities be distributed according to need. The socialist principle of remuneration in proportion to the input of labor is consistent with the best interests of the community as a whole. Building of the new order requires the transformation of human psychology and is the most difficult and revolutionary task.

In this light the role of social legislation has changed. It must provide rest for the worker when actually needed to gain strength for work. It must provide for shorter working hours and similar privileges as required by strenuous work or harmful conditions, schooling, or adolescence. It should assure the woman of conditions which would not detract from her duty as a mother. It should provide a means of subsistence for workers unable to work because of old age, disability, or accident. It should organize work for maximum productivity. It should assure maximum safety for the worker. It should encourage innovations among workers. It should promote labor agreements that encourage workers to greater effort and discourage excessive turnover in employment.

One of the tasks of the Centralna Rada Związkow Zawodowych (Central Council of Trade Unions) is to see that changes in the field of social legislation follow this pattern. The first changes in social legislation after liberation were intended also to unify existing regulations. A 46-hour work week was introduced; overtime pay was standardized; and workers of small factories were included in leave regulations. Additional regulations for the worker's welfare were passed, assuring him of better rest, more efficient medical care, opportunities for improving his general and vocational qualifications, aid in raising children, and increased rights to benefits in serious accidents.

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Leave rights were expanded for adolescents and regular workers and various leaves were introduced for student workers. Length of sick leave before dismissal was extended; limitations on the length of medical care for the worker were eliminated; and the period of sick benefits was extended. Working time was shortened for young working students; a definite maternity leave period was established; childbirth benefits were increased; and regulations protected pregnant women from dismissal. Safety regulations for all types of work were passed. Family insurance was introduced, accident coverage was extended to workers when doing voluntary social work, etc.

Social legislation cannot, however, continue along these lines at the present stage of development. In a Communist system benefits will be distributed according to need, but Poland is still far from that goal.

An abundance of goods and a high level of technology can be gained only through an increase, not a decrease, in effort now. Poland must organize socialist work competition, promote efficiency, and strive for the reduction of internal costs to build the economic foundations of the new system.

Social legislation not only must prevent excessive strain, raise health standards, and provide adequate rest and unemployment insurance but must also become a positive element in building the new system by encouraging work. That the right to work entails an obligation to work is not yet fully appreciated by all workers.

Recent legislation regulates the right to various benefits according to the work done and the social position of the worker. In February 1951, a resolution of this type made the right to family subsidies dependent on employment in a given factory for 3 months. This arrangement prevents unjustified personnel turnover, which in some industries reaches over 20 percent.

The abolition of an additional 5-percent sick benefit for children puts an end to situations where the worker received a larger income when unemployed than when employed since these benefits were not subject to any taxes or deductions.

The introduction of a 10-percent charge for the cost of medicine will discourage failures to pick up medicines ordered.

Another example of recent social legislation was the granting of special privileges in the form of leaves, bonuses, and allowances to miners of whom greater efforts and harder work are demanded.

As stated by Comrade Minc at the Sixth Plenary Session Central Committee of the PZPR, "a defect in the Polish system of insurance and social benefits is the build-up of a system of benefits not consistent with the amount and quality of the work. The overhauling of the system of social insurance and benefits will tend to eliminate excesses and establish a closer relationship between these benefits and the character, amount, and quality of the work. This will help the working class in its struggle for increased production through better qualifications, greater discipline, and greater productivity."

Trade unions must be vigilant for the practical realization of correct social legislation through the organization of social work inspection and factory agreements. It is planned to have trade unions take over state work inspection.

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